

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

MAD COW DISEASE: The Facts

Q: What is BSE?

A: BSE is a degenerative neurological disease caused by an aberrant protein called a prion. It is in the family of diseases—all caused by prions—referred to as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, or TSEs. TSEs include scrapie in sheep and goats, chronic wasting disease (CWD) in deer and elk, and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, or CJD, in humans.

Q: How is BSE spread in cattle?

A: Cattle can become infected with BSE by eating feed contaminated with the infectious BSE agent. This is why in 1997 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration prohibited the use of most mammalian protein in the manufacture of animal feed intended for cows and other ruminants. For more information on the feed ban, please visit the USDA's website at www.fda.gov.

Q: What are the signs of BSE?

A: Affected animals may display changes in temperament, such as nervousness or aggression; abnormal posture; incoordination and difficulty in rising; decreased milk production; or loss of body condition despite continued appetite. There is no treatment, and affected cattle die.

Q: Has BSE been found in the United States?

A: Yes. On December 23 preliminary diagnosis of BSE in a Washington State dairy cow. DNA testing confirmed the 6 1/2-year-old cow was born in Canada and imported to the United States in 2001.

**For more information
please contact:**



US Department of Agriculture
Animal & Plant Health
Inspection Services
Veterinary Services
160 Worcester Providence Rd.
Sutton, Massachusetts 01590

Phone: 508/865-1421 Fax: 508/865-9317

www.aphis.usda.gov/vs

or



MA Agricultural Resources
Animal Health, Biosecurity
& Dairy Services
251 Causeway Street
Boston, Massachusetts, 02114

Phone: 617/626-1795 Fax: 617/626-1850

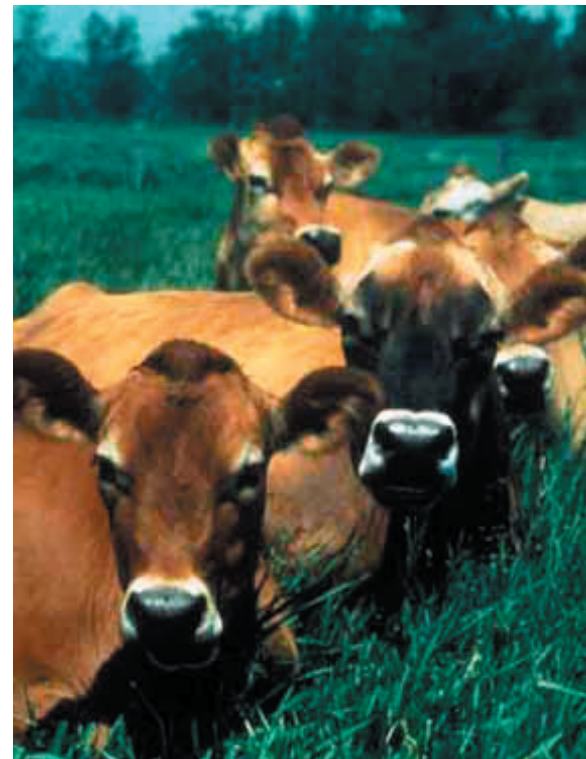
www.mass.gov/agr

Massachusetts

Foreign Animal Disease Surveillance Program

for

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy



Join our team

for

MAD COW DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

ACT ON THE FACTS - HELP PROTECT OUR HERDS

The US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, (MDAR), through a cooperative agreement have begun an enhanced education, outreach and testing program to protect the Massachusetts Dairy Industry and all the cattle in the Commonwealth.

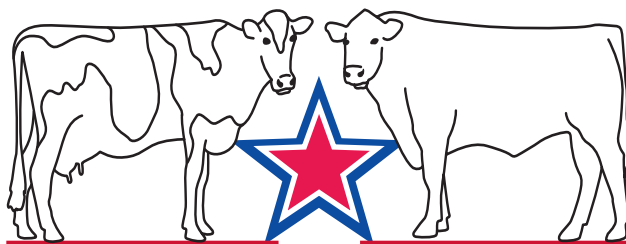
While the USDA will be conducting active surveillance and providing the BSE testing, MDAR will be reaching out to the Commonwealth's farmers, slaughter and rendering facilities, livestock auctions and veterinary clinics.

MDAR has a comprehensive educational program, providing farmers, veterinarians and the many individuals working with and caring for animals, accurate, up-to-date information on all the issues facing the Massachusetts' agricultural community.



If you have a down cow, from the targeted categories, APHIS/VS will come to your farm to collect the sample. Call the toll free: 866/539-7593.

Compensation is available to farmers to help cover carcass disposal costs.



USDA'S BSE TESTING PROTECTING AMERICA'S HERD



You Can Help Identify **BSE** in American Cattle

- ★ **reassure American consumers**
- ★ **reassure foreign consumers**
- ★ **protect our herds**

GET THE FACTS

USDA & MDAR are conducting an enhanced testing program for BSE, and will sample high-risk cattle most likely to have the disease.

Get all the facts on exactly which cows need to be tested, the science behind the program, how you can help and who pays for what.

**Call toll-free: 866/536-7593 or
Visit the APHIS website:
www.aphis.usda.gov**

USDA's BSE Testing Program

USDA/APHIS has undertaken an intensive animal health testing program for BSE as a one-time effort providing a snapshot of the domestic cattle population to define whether BSE is present in the United States, and if so, calculate at what level.

APHIS' increased testing of the US cattle population is designed to test as many cattle from the high-risk population as possible in a 12- to 18-month period. The program is targeted to collect the majority of samples from the following categories:

- Nonambulatory cattle;
- Cattle exhibiting signs of a central nervous system disorder;
- Cattle exhibiting other signs that may be associated with BSE, such as emaciation or injury; or,
- Dead cattle.

Samples will be taken from the farm, slaughter and rendering facilities, livestock auctions and veterinary clinics. The testing program will also include a limited number of random samples from apparently normal, aged animals. The carcasses from these animals will be held and not allowed to enter the human food chain until test results show the samples are negative for BSE.

USDA and the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have strong safeguards in place to prevent the spread of BSE in the US. Since 1989, USDA has banned the import of live ruminants and most ruminant products from the United Kingdom and other countries having BSE. HHS prohibits the use of most mammalian protein in the manufacture of animal feed intended for cows and other ruminants.